

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 02239 141616Z

73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAJ-01

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R 141432Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5105

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

UNCLAS VIENNA 2239

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINS, PO, AU

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO PORTUGUESE COUP

REF: LISBON 1381

1. NEWS REPORTS OF ATTEMPTED COUP IN PORTUGAL WERE HEADLINED IN ALL AUSTRIAN PAPERS ON MARCH 12 AND 13 BUT EVENTS PROVOKED ALMOST NO EDITORIAL COMMENT. HEADLINES GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED COUP AS RESULT OF SPLIT AMONG MILITARY LEADERS AND REACTION IN PORTUGAL AS EXCESSIVE (E.G., WITCH-HUNT AFTER "FASCISTS").

2. INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE "KURIER" COLUMNIST SAID THAT, EXCEPT FOR FACT SPINOLA FLED, IT STRETCHED ONE'S CREDULITY TO BELIEVE GENERAL INVOLVED IN COMIC OPERATION INVOLVING "FEW SOLDIERS AND TWO OVER-AGE PROP-PLANES THAT BOMBED SINGLE KASSERNE". WHATEVER CASE, HE CONTINUED, COMMUNISTS HAVE RUSHED IN AS "GUARDIANS OF DEMOCRACY" TO GET MORE POWER. COLUMNIST WELCOMED FACT THAT APRIL 12 VOTE NOT POSTPONED, BUT ASKED RHETORICALLY WHAT IT WAS WORTH NOW THAT FAIR CHOICE AMONG BROAD SPECTRUM OF POLITICAL IDEAS IS GONE.

3. CONSERVATIVE "DIE PRESSE" CORRESPONDENT CONCURRED
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PAGE 02 VIENNA 02239 141616Z

WITH REPORT FROM MADRID HEADLINED "ELECTION IN PORTUGAL

WILL BE MEANINGLESS".

4. INDEPENDENT LEFT-LEANING "KRONEN ZEITUNG" COLUMNIST WROTE THAT "COUP ATTEMPT HAS HELPED COMMUNIST INTERESTS IN PORTUGAL", REVOLUTIONARY MILITARY LEADERS WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME MAKING "NORMAL" DEMOCRACY OUT OF PORTUGAL, HE CONCLUDED, BUT "CHANCE FOR A SOCIALISTIC PORTUGAL, IN WHICH LIBERTY AGAIN IS ONLY A RELATIVE CONCEPT, STILL EXISTS".

5. PRESS REPORTED ON MARCH 14 THAT LEFTIST AUSTRIAN "CHILE SOLIDARITY FRONT" HAS ASKED AUSTRIAN POLITICAL LEADERS TO DO WHAT THEY CAN TO PREVENT RESTORATION OF OLD PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT SYSTEM AFTER CHILEAN PATTERN. FRONT CHARGED THAT SAME ELEMENTS THAT OVERTHREW ALLENDE WERE PLOTTING AGAINST YOUNG PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY. MOWINCKEL

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